

FE Week



FREE WITH THIS ISSUE

A4E SEVEN'S FRAUD TRIAL UNDER WAY

PAGE 2

LAMBETH COLLEGE STRIKE VOTE SHELVED

PAGE 2

OFQUAL ACCREDITATION CHANGE 'NOT STRAIGHTFORWARD'

PAGE 12

IfL staff bid their final farewells



Institute for Learning (IfL) staff bid a fond farewell to the organisation ahead of its legacy transfer to the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) on Thursday (October 16).

At a gathering in the Jerwood Space near London Bridge, staff celebrated the achievements of the IfL over its 10-year history.

The non-executive board of the IfL voted to close the organisation and transfer its legacy, assets and members to the foundation in July, after concerns over its long-term financial viability.

None of the IfL staff will be transferring to the ETF.

See page 4 for the final IfL survey and pages 8 & 9 for a profile of its chief executive, Dr Jean Kelly

From left, back row: Steve Rich, CPD programme co-ordinator, Rachel Cooke, policy officer (performance and planning), Shane Chowen, policy officer (communications and research), Lucy Davies, head of membership and information, Angela Norman, finance services co-ordinator, and Tristan Wright, IT consultant.

Front row: Marie Ashton, head of marketing and communications, Brian Bastiampillai, data and information co-ordinator, Dr Jean Kelly, chief executive, Sue Colquhoun head of professional status and recognition, and Elaine Battson, director of finance

REFORM WARNING AS APPRENTICESHIPS PLUMMET

@REBECCA COONEY

REBECCA.COONEY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Apprenticeship funding reforms have been thrust back into the spotlight after government figures indicated the programme was heading for the second consecutive annual drop in the number of starts.

Provisional data shows that in 2013/14 the number of all-age apprenticeship starts was 432,400, a 13 per cent fall from the comparable figures for 2012/13.

Although the number of 16 to 18-year-olds starting apprenticeships rose 5 per cent to 117,800 since last year, the number of 19 to 24-year-olds fell 3 per cent to 156,900.

And the number of 25 + apprenticeships — the largest apprentice age group — tumbled from 222,200 to 157,700, a drop of 29 per cent.

The government figures, published in the Statistical First Release (SFR) on Thursday (October 16), also suggest the number of people starting apprenticeships has dropped for the second year running.

The final figures for 2012/13 showed the first

drop in apprenticeship take-up in seven years (from 510,200 to 499,800 — a 2 per cent drop) and if the provisional figures are confirmed in the next SFR (due in January), they would prove the worrying downward trend was continuing — and include level two.

Skills Minister Nick Boles pointed towards the failed FE loans system for apprentices, which applied to learners from the age of 24 and from level three and was dropped in February, as behind the drop and said he “looks forward to numbers bouncing back”.

Nut he has been warned that the hoped-for recovery in numbers remained at risk from proposals currently on his desk to make employers pay towards apprentice training costs.

Stewart Segal, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, told *FE Week*: “While the increase in starts for under 19s is very encouraging, the mixed news underlines why we need to get the apprenticeship funding reforms right, especially in the context of the two main party leaders’ pledges to massively expand the

programme by an extra 200,000 starts a year.

“The Skills Minister at the AELP conference on Wednesday [October 15] told providers he was ‘nervous’ about requiring mandatory cash contributions from employers and the evidence that we and other groups have presented about this proposal’s likely effect on volumes suggest that he is right to take his time about pushing ahead with it.”

Dr Mary Bousted, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), said: “Although it is good news that there has been a rise in the number of under 19-year-olds starting apprenticeships, it is worrying that there has been drop in the number of over 19s doing so.

“When so many young people are out of work, the government needs to do much more to encourage employers to invest in apprentices.”

Mr Boles, who told this month’s AELP autumn conference of his being “nervous” at the apprenticeship funding reform proposals, said: “I welcome the increased number of 16 to 24-year-old apprentices as well as a marked

improvement in the quality of training.”

He added: “Changes in the funding of adult apprenticeships did affect the number of starts between August 2013 and February 2014.

“We have since addressed this and look forward to numbers bouncing back.”

David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, warned the “significant impact” of loans on apprenticeships could “have serious implications for the economy”.

He added the organisation had “concerns” that loans had also affected the uptake of other level three and four courses.

Meanwhile, the number of traineeship starts in the programme’s first year was provisionally put at 10,500.

Mr Boles said the figures were “excellent” and showed traineeships were off to “a strong start”.

See pages 10 and 11 for coverage of the AELP conference, including Mr Boles’s speech

See editor’s comment on page 6

ncfe. not just your ordinary a.o.

Switch to NCFE today.

Call: 0191 239 8003

Email: switching@ncfe.org.uk

Visit: ncfe.org.uk/switch

EDITION 115

FE WEEK TEAM	
Editor:	Chris Henwood
Head designer:	Nicky Phillips
Designer:	Rob Galt
Sub editor:	Paul Offord
Reporters:	Freddie Whittaker
	Rebecca Cooney
	Sophie Scott
Photographer:	Ellis O'Brien
Financials:	Helen Neilly
	Victoria Boyle
Sales manager:	Hannah Smith
Sales executive:	Negar Sharifi
Administration:	Frances Ogefere Dell
Contributors:	Jim Proudfoot
	Jane Byford
	David Hughes
FE Week intern: Chris Spring	
Managing director: Shane Mann	

And tweet us your thoughts [@feweek](#) or with the [#feweek](#)

Contact the editor

Please inform the *FE Week* editor of any errors or issues of concern regarding this publication.

Email chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk with Error/Concern in the subject line. Please include the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is.

SUBSCRIBE

For an annual subscription to *FE Week* for just £75 visit www.feweek.co.uk and click on 'subscribe' at the top of the page.

www.feweek.co.uk

ADVERTISE WITH US

If you are interested in placing a product or job advert in a future edition please click on the 'advertise' link at the top of the page on feweek.co.uk or contact:

E: hannah.smith@feweek.co.uk
T: 020 81234 778

Disclaimer

FE Week is owned and published by Lsect Ltd. The views expressed within the publication are those of the authors named, and are not necessarily those of FE Week, Lsect Ltd or any of its employees. While we try to ensure that the information we provide is correct, mistakes do occur and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of our material.

The design of the printed newspaper and of the website is copyright of Lsect Ltd and material from the newspaper should not be reproduced without prior permission. If you wish to reproduce an article from either the printed paper or the website, both the article's author and FE Week must be referenced (to not do so would be an infringement on copyright).

Lsect Ltd is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites linked to.

Please address any complaints to the editor. We are fully committed to the Press Complaints Commission's Code of Practice. If you have a complaint which cannot be resolved by the editor, write to the Press Complaints Commission, Halton House, 22–23 Holborn, London EC1N 2JD

Learning & Skills Events, Consultancy and Training Ltd

161-165 Greenwich High Road
London SE10 8JA
T: 020 8123 4778
E: news@feweek.co.uk

NEWS

TRIAL OVER A4E SEVEN ACCUSED OF FRAUD OFFENCES UNDER WAY

@REBECCAKCOONEY
REBECCA.COONEY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The trial of seven people charged with fraud-related offences after allegedly ripping off the taxpayer at welfare-to-work provider A4e is under way at Reading Crown Court.

Ex-A4e recruiters Hayley Faye Wilson, Matthew Hannigan-Train, Sarah Hawkins, Serge Wyett, Yasmin Ahmad and former account managers Ines Cano-Uribe and Zabar Mehmood Khalil all pleaded not guilty when the trial opened on Monday, October 6.

The case followed a police investigation into financial rewards claimed for helping the unemployed into work through the European Social Fund (ESF) ‘Aspire to Inspire’ Lone Parent mentoring programme, which ended in July 2011.

It is alleged that they “made false instruments” — forged documentation to support fraudulent claims for rewards for work with learners who had not found work or did not exist over a period of four years until February last year.

Wilson, aged 26, of Milton Keynes, Cano-Uribe, 38, of Madrid, Hannigan-Train, 30, of Bristol, Hawkins, 32, of Bagshot, Surrey, and Wyett, 40, of Richmond, are all charged with conspiracy to make false instruments.

Cano-Uribe and Khalil, 35, of Slough, are jointly charged with making false instruments but separately face further charges — Khalil is charged with a further three counts of making false instruments, while Cano-Uribe faces one more of the same charge.

Yasmin Ahmad, 40, of Colchester, faces charges of making false instruments and making articles for use in fraud.

A Crown Prosecution Service spokesperson said: “Under the terms of the contract, payments were made when the scheme successfully placed individuals in employment.

“It is alleged that many of the reward payments related either to people who never attended A4e or to clients whom A4e had not successfully placed in employment. The contract was to deliver motivation and training and to assist people to find employment.”

Andrew Dutton, A4e chief executive, said: “A4e co-operated fully with the police enquiry, after our own internal investigation first brought these alleged incidents to light.

“Since these alleged events took place, we have augmented our controls and processes to seek to ensure that nothing like this could ever happen again.

“Furthermore, rigorous audits undertaken by the Department for Work and Pensions [DWP] and the Skills Funding Agency have concluded that there is no evidence of fraud on any of the contracts that we hold with them.

“A4e has, of course, committed to paying back in full the total value of alleged unsubstantiated claims that were made to the DWP.”

A CPS spokesperson said the case was expected to run for five weeks in total.

All defendants are on unconditional bail. [Proceeding]

FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

Loans payout tops £115m

The number of learners with 24+ advanced learning loans paid to their FE provider between August last year and the end of July was 55,900.

Latest figures released by the Student Loans Company also showed that the total amount paid out during the period was £115.8m.

The average amount paid per learner was £2,070, up from £1,670 that had been paid-out between August last year and the end of April this year.

Retailer Dixons Carphone has taken on around 140 former Phones 4u apprentices.

The firm took on 160 Phones 4u outlets after the firm went into administration last month. A spokesperson said it was “honouring” contracts of around 140 apprentices employed at the stores.

Vodafone and EE declined to comment on what would happen to apprentices at 140 and 58 former Phones 4u outlets they had purchased respectively.

Phones 4u had employed around 900 apprentices in total.

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) is offering £250,000 to develop progression pathways for low paid hospitality and retail workers.

Along with the Department for Work and Pensions, it has launched a competition for employers to run 12 to 18-month initiatives helping employees progress and stay in their roles, saving them costly recruitment processes.

The government will contribute £250,000 per project alongside employer contributions. The competition closes on November 28.

Visit the UKCES section on www.gov.uk for more details.

NEWS

Apprentice group campaigns on childcare

@PAULOFFORD
PAUL.OFFORD@FEWEEK.CO.UK

The National Society of Apprentices (NSOA) has called for a childcare funding scheme that hands out up to £8,400 a-year to young adults in FE extended to apprentices.

The group — launched by the National Union of Students (NUS) in March, as reported at the time by *FE Week* (pictured) — gathered views from 50 apprentices across London, Bristol, Liverpool, Doncaster and Birmingham last month on key issues facing members.

A common complaint, it said, was that Care to Learn, which provides under 20s with up to £8,400 a-year in London and £7,680 elsewhere in England for childcare, was not available to apprentices.

The NSOA has therefore made the issue one of its first campaigns with an aim to make the government extend the scheme.

Another campaign suggestion from apprentices was to develop a new kite mark for “excellent” apprenticeships.

An NUS spokesperson said: “Care to Learn is a lifeline to many young parents who are looking to continue their education while caring for their children. The NSOA think it would be fantastic if its provision could be extended to apprentices.”

A government spokesperson declined t comment on whether Care to Learn would be extended to apprentices, but told

FE Week: “Apprentices are entitled to a range of support and financial benefits [but not Care to Learn] in the same way as any other employees — such as child tax credits, to help them support their family and continue their education.

“We have also doubled the number of two-year-olds that are eligible for 15 hour-a-week free childcare to 116,000.”

Parents entitled to child tax credit, which is for example available to most one parent families with a combined income of £26,000 or less, can be paid up to £2,750 a-year per able-bodied child and £7,105 annually for each seriously disabled child.

David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, said: “This is a good example of how inconsistent and unfair the learner support systems for young people can be.

“I am sure the intention was never to disadvantage young apprentice parents, but the way this policy [Care to Learn] works means it does. I would hope that common sense prevails and this problem can be addressed quickly.”

The NUS spokesperson said “nothing is solid enough to present just yet” regarding the proposed apprenticeship kite mark.

But, she added: “Apprentices at the events [in London, Bristol, Liverpool, Doncaster and



Birmingham] wanted a way of differentiating between apprenticeships. This year the leadership team will be looking at how this might work.”

All providers that train apprentices can register with NSOA. It already represents 150,000 apprentices from 130 registered training providers.

After providers join, their apprentices are entitled to apprentice extra discount cards launched by the NUS in 2012.

QCF ‘needs fixing, not ditching’

@FCDWHITTAKER
FHWHITTAKER@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Ofqual has been urged not to “throw the baby out with the bathwater” after its boss hinted the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) could be scrapped.

Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) chief executive Stephen Wright said he would like to see the brand and good elements of the QCF retained after Ofqual chief executive Glenys Stacey said it had been “found wanting” at the FAB conference in Leicester on Tuesday (October 14).

Her comments have been seen as an indication the QCF had already been written-off by the qualifications watchdog despite a consultation on its future having only ended on Thursday (October 16).

Mr Wright said: “When we consulted members the biggest thing that came out was not to throw the baby out with the bathwater. QCF is not perfect, but needs fixing, not completely ditching.”

A spokesperson for NOCN said: “We do accept that change is necessary to create greater flexibility for the new employer-led requirements and to deal with what we see as important issues of ‘un-intended’ consequences deriving from the funding arrangements.

“But reliance on the General Conditions of Recognition as a replacement for an employer-recognised framework is inadequate to meet the needs of our economy and will in our view undermine public confidence in vocational qualifications.”

Ms Stacey, said: “However well-intentioned

the QCF may have been, we have looked at the reality on the ground and we have found the QCF wanting.

“We know and have heard about how difficult its introduction was, that some awarding organisations were forced to shoehorn good qualifications into the QCF.

“That’s not to say that all QCF qualifications are not fit for purpose, there are strong qualifications in there. But in many cases the QCF rules have done the opposite.”

Ms Stacey also revealed that the requirement for qualifications to be accredited by Ofqual before they are regulated would be lifted from November 3, a move the watchdog consulted on earlier this year.

“Why? Because we have found that accreditation itself, a check at the start of the qualification, is not an effective way of securing a valid qualification as it runs,” she said.

“It’s easy to assume at the moment that an accreditation process provides a vital seal of approval for a qualification but it does not.”

See page 12 for an expert piece on qualifications reforms by former Ofqual accreditation manager Jim Proudfoot

OCR policy director Paul Steer welcomed plans to lift the accreditation requirement, but said: “There is also a need for clearer public communications around the proposals, making it clear to the public that vocational qualifications will continue to be subject to high levels of regulation.”

See page 12 expert piece by former Ofqual accreditation manager Jim Proudfoot

World skills wins £18m BIS boost

The government has pledged to continue funding the Skills Show, skills competitions and the UK’s entry to WorldSkills for another two years.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) promised £18m for Find a Future, which organises the Skills Show and WorldSkills, spread over 2015-16 and 2016-17.

From April, the funding will be routed through the Education and Training Foundation (ETF).

Find a Future chief executive Ross Maloney said he was “pleased” by the move, which he described as a government commitment “to continuing its investment in young people, and the development of their skills”.

A BIS statement said the decision to route funding through the ETF would bring the Skills Show and Skills Competitions closer to sector-wide activity on professional standards and employer engagement.

David Russell, ETF chief executive, said bringing together the ETF’s work and Find a Future would “provide great opportunities to build on the success of The Skills Show and WorldSkills UK Skills Competitions in our mission of supporting standards of vocational excellence”.

Find a Future will also raise cash by increasing commercial sponsorship of shows.

FE Associates

Quality Improvement Solutions

What works and why?

We understand FE and we'll find what works for **you**

Professional support for all subject areas

Developmental lesson observations

Expert help with English & maths

Bespoke staff development

6th Form & HE specialists

Leadership coaching

"Real impact on teaching and learning"

"A brilliant working partnership"

Helping you move in the right direction

01823 337655

enquiries@feassociates.com

BW Consultants

@feinsights

www.feassociates.com

‘Light-bulb moments’ figure in final IfL survey

The results of the final Institute for Learning (IfL) survey of teachers and trainers in FE and skills are presented by Shane Chowen, IfL policy officer (communications and research).

It has been a privilege to work for FE teachers and trainers as the IfL’s policy officer for the last three years.

My policy colleague Rachel Cooke and I have worked together, consulting IfL members and representing their views on a plethora of consultations involving more than 50,000 practitioners.

Often, these were in reaction to government or sector organisations and so, given the pace of change in FE and skills, we rarely had the opportunity to ask the questions we really wanted to ask.

In June, the IfL launched what was to be our final major member consultation — an omnibus survey for members and non-members to complete over the summer.

The questions were designed to provoke reflection and creativity, two things that IfL has long valued in the considered insights of teachers and trainers.

The survey, and consequently the report of the findings, had three main sections: questions about professionalism, professional identity and careers; questions about policy; and questions about continuing professional development.

We received more than 1,200 responses. One of the best things about working for IfL has been the ability to connect with practitioners across all parts of the FE and skills sector. This survey was no exception.

We had responses from teachers and trainers in the armed forces, public services and employer providers as well as FE colleges and independent training providers.

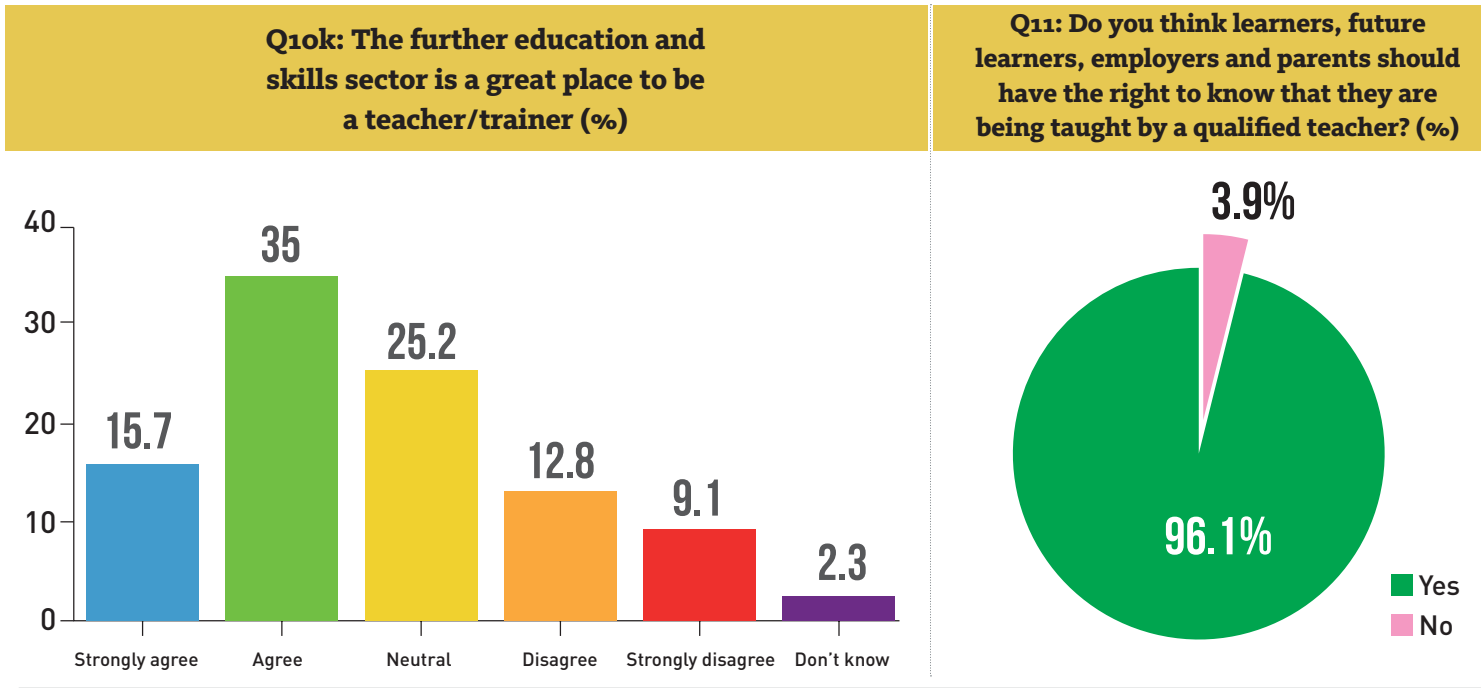
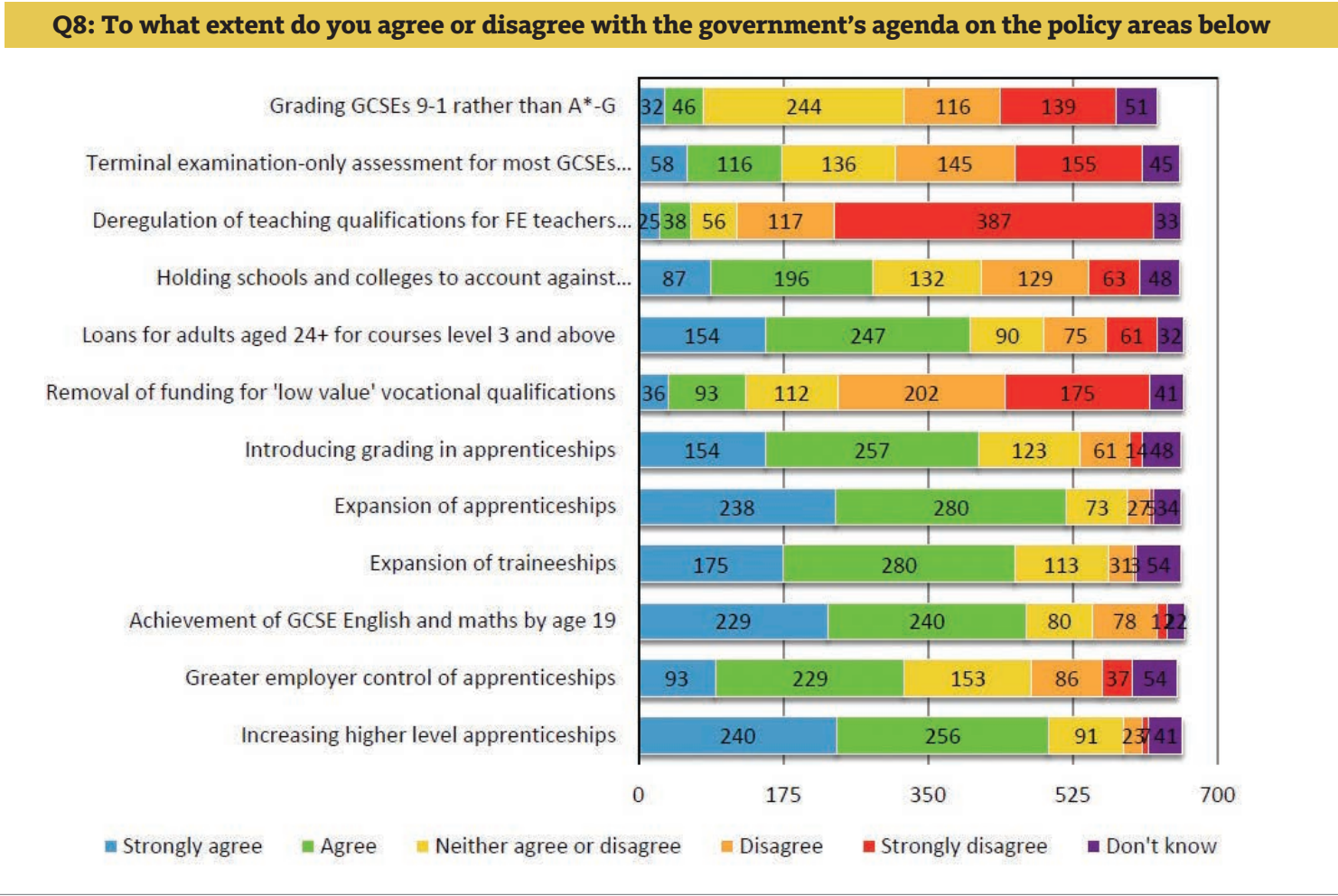
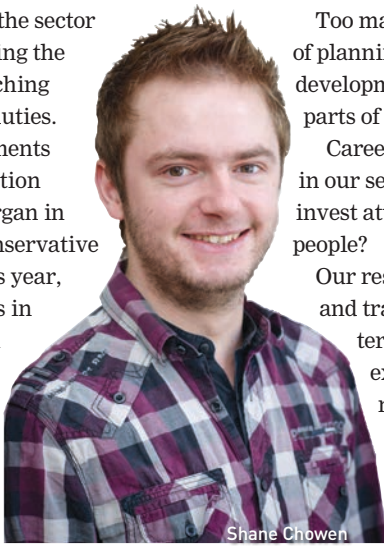
We wanted to be able to record the reflective perspective of practitioners on what it is about the job that gets them out of bed in the morning and what can be improved.

More than anything, it seems that the central motivation for teachers in FE and skills is the successful achievement and progression of learners.

Time and time again we saw phrases like “light-bulb moments,” “when students get it” and “when you see learners get where they wanted to go”.

In terms of improving the job, practitioners across the sector talked about redressing the balance between teaching and administrative duties.

Echoing the sentiments articulated by Education Secretary Nicky Morgan in her speech at the Conservative Party conference this year, teachers and trainers in our sector do not feel that enough time can be dedicated to planning and evaluation, thus potentially inhibiting



creativity and innovation in the classroom. Too many examples were presented of planning, reflection and professional development not being considered legitimate parts of the working week.

Careers advice and guidance is a big theme in our sector’s narrative, but how often do we invest attention to the career paths of our own people?

Our research highlights that most teachers and trainers see career progression in terms of becoming more advanced and experienced teaching professionals, rather than being ‘promoted’ to management positions.

Teachers and trainers in FE and skills are aspirational, and IfL research shines a light on

the kinds of roles and activities — teaching, management, professional or academic — they consider in their career aspirations.

If an FE teacher or trainer were appointed as the minister responsible for the sector after the next general election, the lack of fair funding would be a key priority.

his finding comes from an open question inviting survey participants to list five things they would seek to achieve if they were the minister for FE and skills. Other priorities included reinstating requirements for teachers to undertake teacher training; ensuring school leavers had the right skills to progress to FE; and increasing freedoms and flexibilities for teachers by redressing workload issues.

Teachers and trainers also felt that their

local labour markets were failing to provide good jobs for their learners; that the general public had become more aware of FE than previously; and that the current education and skills system was not sufficiently accessible for adults who need retraining.

I commend these findings to the sector as valuable insight for further development of pedagogy, policy, professionalism and professional development in our sector.

Pictured: a selection of the findings from the IfL report Pedagogy, policy and professionalism — its final survey.

Visit www.feweeek to read full IfL report

ncfe.

different.
it’s what we do.

We’re proud to be different and we’re also proud of our qualification suites and packages.

We can support your delivery of Study Programmes, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Functional Skills, maths and English units as well as a wide range of qualifications eligible for funding.

Switching to NCFE is as easy as 1, 2, 3 so make the switch today.

Call **0191 239 8003** or email our switching team at **switching@ncfe.org.uk**

Call: **0191 239 8003**

Email: **switching@ncfe.org.uk**

Visit: **ncfe.org.uk/switch**

FE WEEK COMMENT

On the level

It wasn't too long ago that *FE Week* seemed the lone voice drawing public attention to falling numbers of 16 to 18 apprenticeships starts while overall figures rocketed.

Thankfully, that teenage trend appears to have been in arrest since the third quarter of last academic year.

Unfortunately, we are now witnessing falling numbers overall — due to a decline in 19+ starts and, in the main, the 25+ age group.

But what is interesting here, and what the Skills Minister's apprentice FE loans excuse does not take into account, is that these falls were not limited to levels three and above (those to which FE loans applied).

The failed FE loans experiment most certainly affected 25+ apprentice numbers at these levels — but why also the fall in level two?

These intermediate apprenticeship starts for the 19+ age group fell provisionally by 3 per cent to 200,200 last academic year. It was a 5 per cent fall for 25+ to 104,200.

Could the reason be that there were incorrect assumptions that 24-plus FE loans also applied to level two apprenticeships?

With the quality of advice and guidance again the source of criticism this week (see page seven), it's a conclusion we might just have to consider while thinking seriously about the wisdom of further funding reforms for apprenticeships.

Chris Henwood
chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk

TOP AELP CONFERENCE TWEETS

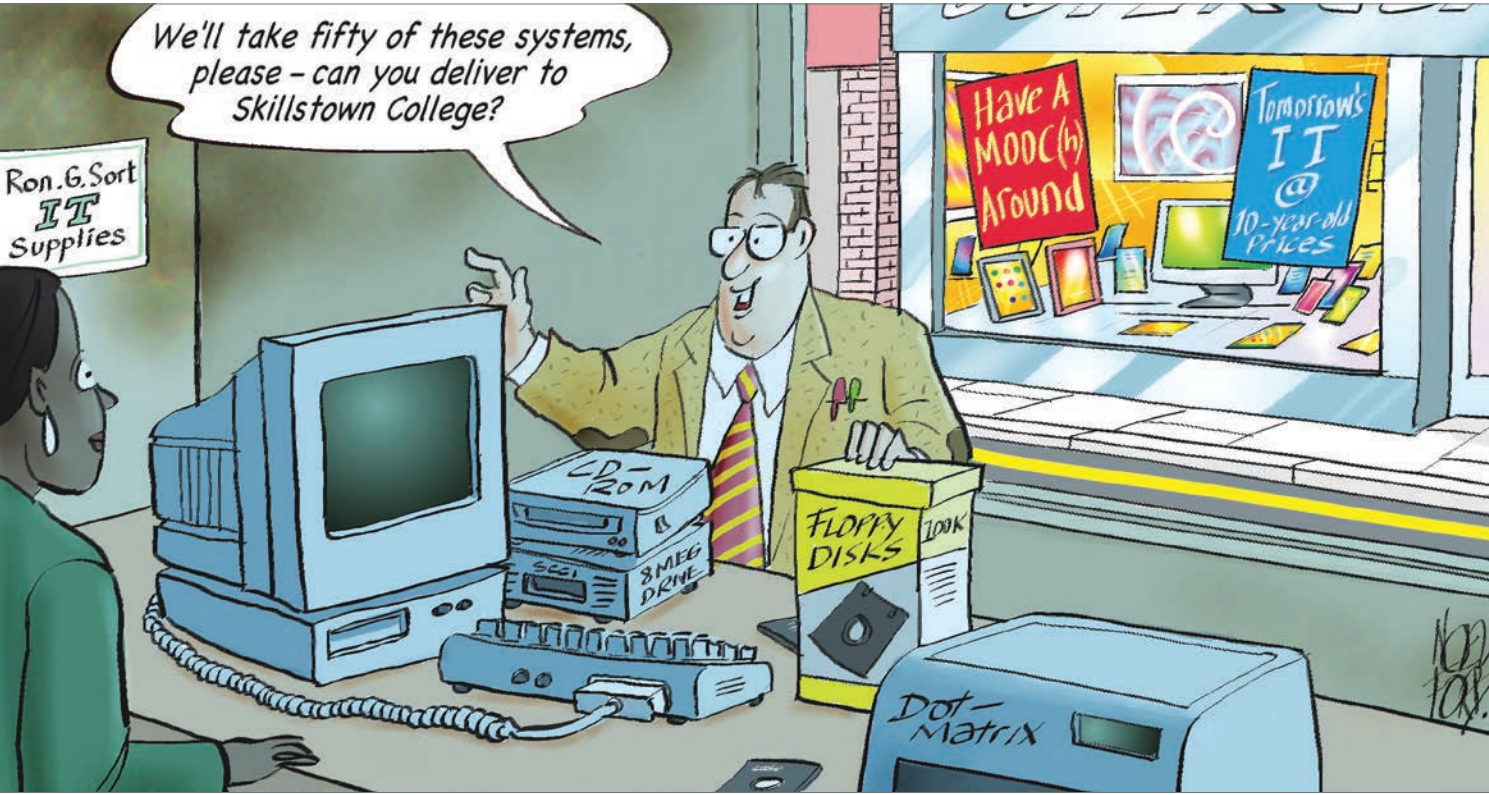
@joeAlane: sees calls for a stable, blended approach to localism and @NickBolesMP called apprenticeships 'one of two gold-standard routes'

@Davidlmarriott: quality assurance arrangements still not even on the radar for the funding reforms. How can providers prepare a price???

@MarkBrowne01: @UCASProgress Is there really a demand for this? Most of ours have no problem recruiting. The current system is fit for purpose

@AELPUK: Party leaders' pledges mean an extra 200,000 @Apprenticeships starts a year, Jennifer Coupland tells #ac2014

@PaulW153: Kirstie donnelly @cityandguildspr says real question is are gcse the right thing to be doing for learners at work? Good question



Adult skills budget going on ‘wrong sort of IT’

@REBECCAKCOONEY
REBECCA.COONEY@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Further education colleges have a vital role to play in bringing digital skills qualifications up to date to boost computer literacy, a group of Lords has heard.

The House of Lords digital skills committee heard the adult skills budget (ASB) was being spent on the “wrong sort of IT” from a panel of expert witnesses on Tuesday (October 14).

The committee, chaired by Lady Morgan of Huyton, is taking evidence on the digital capability of the nation.

Karen Price OBE, chief executive of training provider e-skills UK, told the committee: “We need to look very seriously at the role of FE colleges and what they can contribute.”

The FE sector, she said, needed to offer short, focussed IT courses for those who wanted digital skills for their job but were not necessarily digital specialists.

But, she said: “The funding system currently works against it. We have an enormous adult skills budget and a lot of it is

spent on IT but it's the wrong sort of IT — it's qualifications that are 10 years old and very out of date.

“Colleges’ offer is driven by where they can access funding, these qualifications and courses need repurposing.

“It's not going to cost us any more money and then the amount of adult skills budget spent on it can be spent on relevant material that the market and the community need.”

The Office for National Statistics estimates 2.2m people in the UK have no technical skills, 10.8m have only social or “citizen” digital skills, 13.6m who have non-specialist IT work skills, and 2.9m “digital makers” work in technology-focussed roles.

Rachel Neaman, chief executive of Go ON UK, agreed digital skills qualifications needed constant updating to cover new technologies.

“The idea of setting a curriculum that's going to last for five to ten years in the digital space is clearly no longer feasible,” she told the committee.

“At the moment the adult skills budget is just over 2bn and yet some qualifications are

not relevant to today's digital world — those are not going to help us become a digital nation.”

She added the UK needed to “face the fact that digital literacy has become the fourth pillar of literacy — you have reading, writing, arithmetic and then you have digital skills.”

Maggie Philbin, leader of the UK Skills Taskforce, said: “You don't get to GCSE, A-level or apprenticeship and stop, learning has to go on otherwise it becomes out of date or obsolete.

“With digital skills... we need to be able to access training at any age no matter what your background... and FE is ideally placed to do that.”

At previous a committee meeting last month, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education chief executive David Hughes said Local Enterprise Partnerships had made “patchy progress” in helping learners improve digital skills and needed more responsibility.

The committee continues to take evidence, with the next meeting due to take place on October 21.

COMMENTS

Ofsted reinspection timeframe halved

The other thing to remember is that providers graded as “Require Improvement” also have a link HMI under the “Support & Challenge” initiative, so extending re-inspection to two years for Grade 3s help them to fully embed improvements and have at least a full year's validated data to draw upon providing more robust evidence of impact. Also, under Support & Challenge, the link HMI has power to bring forward an inspection if need be.....

Paul B

Even more food for thought, brace yourselves chaps ... Ofsted reinspection timeframe halved

@Gallachc

Indies challenged to compete

Fantastic news - that hopefully more private training provider will join in with skills competitions

@ACERupdate

SFA to allow funding ‘top-up’ for new Esol quals

Perhaps not that sensible – Wouldn't it have been better to use the learner support funding to top up provider shortfall as it's now all part of the ASB pot. By adding non-regulated aims to a learners record it brings in achievement rate complications, which impacts on success rates, minimum standards etc etc etc.

And now that the precedent has been set, look out for providers delivering other aims where the funding doesn't cover the costs of delivery, low level English and maths being prime examples... and (just for fun) taking this one step further, it could

then get so cumbersome that funding per GLH would be the only answer & breed another merry-go-round of simplification.

Country Bumpkin

Phones 4u apprentices find new employers

Will EQL be able to deliver?

MoriannaBarriman

‘Unsustained’ initiatives and ‘inability to learn lessons’ affecting skills system, report warns

[only on feweek.co.uk]

Unsustained initiatives and inability to learn lessons undermines skills system...applies to more than FE skills

@alistairm

NEWS

Second academic issues guidance criticism

@FCDWHITTAKER
FWHITTAKER@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Further education sector bodies have called for action after another academic criticised careers advice in England.

In a report written for the Sutton Trust, Professor Tristram Hooley of the University of Derby described statutory guidance issued by the government on careers advice as “weak” and called for the role of the National Careers Service (NCS) to be extended and its website reviewed.

The report, entitled Advancing Ambitions, is the second of its kind this year after Sir John Holman, Emeritus Professor at the University of York, said advice had “failed young people for generations” in his report entitled Good Careers Guidance, written for The Gatsby Foundation in April. It comes after the government passed the legal responsibility for careers advice on to schools in 2011, and earlier this year clarified statutory guidance to require schools to specifically promote vocational routes in their advice.

Professor Hooley said: “These changes have resulted in a major reorganisation of the delivery of career guidance in schools.

“Unfortunately this has not been monitored in any systematic way, and only limited attempts been made to measure the impacts of the changes. We need a much stronger NCS to support schools and colleges in delivering for young people.”

But Brian Lightman, general secretary of the



Apprenticeships were celebrated at an event on the Houses of Parliament terrace, overlooking the river Thames.

The event, organised by International Skills Standards Organisation UK, sponsored by City & Guilds and attended by 150 people, was hosted by former Labour Skills Minister John Healey MP. Current Skills Minister Nick Boles was also at the event, last week.

Hawk Training apprentice Luke Kotowski, aged 18, was one of a number of young learners at the event.

“We should make our apprenticeships known internationally, which will

Association of School and College Leaders, said: “This report provides yet more evidence about the need for young people to have access to face-to-face guidance from a qualified careers professional. There is no need for any further reports about this matter. It is time for

action.” Dr Mary Bousted, general secretary at the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said: “There is a limit to the amount of research about the weakness of careers advice which the government can ignore.”

A Department for Education spokesperson

said: “We know there is much more to do and we are looking closely at how we can further strengthen the system to ensure that every child has access to the support they need to make the right choices at the right time.”

The MindSet

REGIONAL LAUNCHES

STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY TOOLKIT

A free online tool to assess employability provision within colleges

“The Toolkit was invaluable in helping staff to really engage with the employability agenda, and make immediate and longer term changes to their strategies for the benefit of our learners.”

Tracey McIntosh, Director of Employers and Partnerships, Barnet & Southgate College.

CONTACT US: info@themindset.org.uk www.themindset.org.uk @MindSetUK

COME ALONG TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING EVENTS TO FIND OUT MORE:

Monday 20/10/14: **Midlands Launch** @ Derby College, DE24 8JE

Thursday 23/10/14: **South Launch** @ Bournemouth & Poole College, BH14 0LS

Tuesday 4/11/14: **London Launch** @ South Essex College, RM17 6TF

Tuesday 11/11/14: **North East Launch** @ Sunderland College, SR3 4AH

Thursday 13/11/14: **NorthWest Launch** @ Stockport College, SK1 3UG

All from 1.30pm—4.30pm

The MindSet is a group of like-minded organisations who are committed to actively changing the perception and reality of the further education sector in preparing students for work.

BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW:

Email: alicegrey@themindset.org.uk or call: **0191 605 3300**

PROFILE



66
What I really love about FE is there's always an opportunity to do something else, something different

NOT GOING QUIETLY

@FCDWHTTAKER
FWHTTAKER@FEWEEK.CO.UK

As the Institute for Learning (IfL) enters the last few weeks of its existence, Dr Jean Kelly's mood is a mixture of sadness and demob happiness. Her desk in the open plan offices the IfL shares with dozens of other third sector organisations near Old Street is surrounded by boxes as all 14 members of staff prepare to move on to new things and transfer the IfL's legacy to the Education and Training Foundation (ETF).

Kelly, aged 65, admits she didn't always know her tenure as chief executive, which began in May after Toni Fazaeli retired, would be so short, but she's happy with the organisation taking the reins.

"There was no way that financially we could keep going as we were," she says, having witnessed membership numbers fall in the face of increasing fees in response to withdrawal of government funding

"My brief when I took over was to look for other ways that we could really continue to

make a difference.

"We tried everything in theory to do that, and nothing really stacked up because what it would mean would have been a diminution of what we were.

"For us, what was important was that qualified teacher learning and skills status [QTLS] went forward. It was such a battle to get that equivalence between qualified teacher status [QTS] and QTLS, but when it came in in 2012, I mean, that was a terrific moment for all of us."

But while Kelly will be sad to leave professional life behind, she is looking forward to having time to do other things, including spending time with her two sons and three grandchildren and enjoying life in her native Charlton.

Growing up in South East London, Kelly attended Addey and Stanhope School, in Deptford, and, like countless others, she cites the hit and miss nature of her education as one of her reasons for going into teaching.

"I had fantastic, inspirational teachers, and some really poor teachers," she tells me.

"I think they do scar you actually, in

some way — you've got to be quite strong to get over it. And that stays with you, and it's something that you can pass on to other people to show that not everybody can do it, and can do it well."

After obtaining a certificate in education at St Gabriel's Teacher Training College, in London, she taught in primary schools in the London boroughs of Bromley and Croydon while also studying with the Open University, an organisation she still enjoys a professional relationship with to this day.

But Kelly craved specialism, and at the age of 40 decided to defy convention by going to Oxford.

"It was daunting," she says. "I saw an advert in the paper, and it said Harris Manchester College was opening its doors to mature students, so I thought: 'If I'm going to go and do a degree, I want to see what it's all about at Oxford'.

"I turned up for the interview, and they thought I had come for a job as a

cleaner. I had to fight to establish myself as somebody serious. And that's what's interesting, if you're from a working class background, you are seen as dabbling, but I was totally serious."

Leaving Oxford in 1992, Kelly returned to London with a fellowship at Queen Mary University where she lectured and received a PhD in 1997, and it was then that her long working relationship with FE began.

Initially managing the Cert Ed programme at Soundwell FE college in Bristol for two years, she returned to London again as manager of the BA/MA professional studies in education at Croydon College before moving on to policy roles with the Learning and Skills Development Agency and the Centre for Excellence in Leadership.

She says: "[IfL chair] Sue Crowley and I wrote an article years ago called Snakes and Ladders, and we said that in FE, your career is a bit like snakes and



Kelly aged five

ladders. It's not exactly planned, you go up and down, and you might move across or you might slide down somewhere else, and you start again.

"It's a bit of happenstance and being flexible. I think what I really love about FE is there's always an opportunity to do something else, something different, and it always presents itself if you are willing to look and willing to take that chance — and I took the chances that came along. And that was really lucky for me."

As IfL's executive director for professional development between 2007 and 2014, Kelly presided over the highs and lows of the organisation, and laments the damage done by controversy over proposed membership fees several years ago.

"The damage that was done to us and our reputation in the preceding years was quite considerable," she says. "It's hard to come back from that and still get people enthused about what you are as an organisation.

"We've moved on and we're through it, but it was bad. We were in the eye of a perfect storm that blew up around government,

unions, employers, and we were kind of caught in the middle. And it was a shame, because we wanted to work with all of them, and to do that well, and it didn't turn out that way.

"And of course the real fallout from that was the deregulation of qualifications, of having to remain in good professional standing, of having to have QTLS. That's a pity. That's a real pity"

Kelly admits she hadn't planned on retiring so soon, but decided after the plan to close the IfL was announced that it presented an opportunity "to do things I have always wanted to do". The death of her trade unionist husband Brian last year was also a factor.

Whether it's the comfort of impending retirement, or perhaps because she has always been quite outspoken, Dr Kelly is more than happy to share her views on the current government and its education policies.

"I don't think the damage has really kicked in yet," she warns.

"If there is a change of government in May,

"We were in the eye of a perfect storm that blew up around government, unions, employers"

which I hope there will be, and if that change means going back to what has always been the bedrock of education in this country, then I think the damage could be contained, and it can be rectified. But if it goes on for years

and years and years in this way, it could do untold damage."

As our interview comes to an end, it's obvious that Dr Kelly's will not be a quiet retirement, although she insists she will not materialise in the offices of ETF chief executive David Russell.

She laughs when I suggest there might be a Greenwich Borough councillor or London Assembly member in her yet, but certainly doesn't rule anything out.

She says: "I think if you don't feel that whatever you are doing is making a difference, then I can't see why you would want to carry on, to be honest. It's important. It's a social responsibility, it's a human responsibility, so yes — I would like to do something like that, yes.

"I desperately want to write and go back and do some work with the Open University, and also the University of the Third Age.

"I am in discussions with the Ministry of Justice because I would quite like to be a magistrate, but apparently I'm too old. They have said I need to talk to the Lord Chancellor, so I am pursuing that."

It's a personal thing

What is your favourite book, and why?

The Riverside by Chaucer. I spent more than five years reading every page of this for my PhD thesis and my teaching. I just love language and the history of language and that's what Chaucer is all about

What is your pet hate?

Queue jumping. At airports, on buses, trains and in shops — in particular those people who do it pretending they haven't noticed a queue at all

What do you do to switch off after work?

I go home, cook, watch Channel 4 news — I'm very good at putting things into perspective

If you could invite anyone, living or dead, to a dinner party who would it be?

Family. They always turn out to be the best parties after all

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

It sounds boring but I always, always wanted to be a teacher. I used to teach my teddies using a blackboard and easel and a range of chalks. My techniques improved over the years



Kelly with grand-daughter Anya Rich, aged two

Kelly (centre left) after her final exams, pictured in Holywell Street, Oxford, with friends

Kelly and Europe Singh at a Centre for Excellence in Leadership event (CEL)

Kelly at CEL, 2004

Skills Minister admits to ‘nerves’ over making employers cough up for apprenticeships

@FCDWHITTAKER
FWHITTAKER@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Skills Minister Nick Boles has admitted to being “nervous” about proposed employer cash contributions towards apprenticeship training costs.

Addressing the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) autumn conference in Birmingham last week, Mr Boles acknowledged employers already contributed to their apprenticeship programmes in “a million ways”.

And he said he was still considering whether mandatory cash contributions would be a good idea.

He said the government was right to pilot its apprenticeship reforms, which include a requirement that employers pay one third of training and assessment costs, but said they would not necessarily work for all businesses.

He said: “I think we should all be honest and observe that the employers involved in delivering apprenticeships under that pilot are employers of a particular kind, a particular depth of resource and the apprenticeships involved are a particular kind of apprenticeship, they’re not necessarily absolutely typical.

“I would like every employer who is creating an apprenticeship to want to dig into their pockets to contribute in cash as well as in all of the other million ways employers do contribute, towards the success of that programme, but the question is, do you require it?

“I am nervous, I think, about the effect, particularly on all those employers which do not currently do apprenticeships, I am nervous about the idea of an obligation to put in cash.”

It comes after *FE Week* exclusively revealed earlier this month that Mr Boles had hinted at plans to scrap the contributions in his first interview since his appointment in July.

Mr Boles also admitted that the task of getting apprenticeship starts past the 3m mark by 2020, which was set for him by Prime Minister David Cameron in his speech to the Conservative Party Conference, had made his “stomach turn”.

He said the percentage of employers providing apprenticeships was still “tiny”, and added: “We don’t need 10 per cent or 15 per cent of employers doing apprenticeships, we need 40 per cent, 50 per cent, 60 per cent, and that is the really important challenge the Prime Minister has set me.

“It’s not so much the headline number of 3m, though it’s always good to have something which makes your stomach turn slightly as a challenge, it’s the idea that there should be a simple guidance given to every young person.”

He said he wanted young people to understand that apprenticeships and university are the two “gold-plated, gold-standard routes through life” and that government would do “anything in its power” to help people down one of them.



He used his speech to outline his belief in three “profound responsibilities” towards young people held by his generation, which he said had “created the world in which these youngsters are growing up”.

He said the government and providers needed to be honest about the fact that jobs increasingly demand a certain level of literacy and numeracy, and that promoting and boosting functional skills would play a part in that.

He added that young people needed to be “challenged and stretched” but not “mollycoddled”, and said that with this in mind the government had been right to cancel a “raft of qualifications which might have been quite fun to do and...easier and cheaper to teach, but actually provided very little value to the young people taking them”.

He added: “The third responsibility we have towards these young people is to guide them, to steer them, not to leave them stumbling around in the dark without adequate information on which to make the

choices about their future lives.

“That’s why as a government we have much more to do on careers advice.”

His comments came after AELP chief executive Stewart Segal told delegates that independent learning providers were continuing to deliver valuable training despite cutbacks at government level.

He said: “There is no doubt that you, and we and the department have faced a lot of change, that’s quite fair. Budgets overall are decreasing, so the value for money issue is more important than ever.

“But within that, we should be pleased that many of the programmes which you deliver, those work-based programmes, those programmes which link with employers, are the ones which have high-priority apprenticeships, work experience within study programmes, traineeships, that’s all very positive.

“And you’re also at the forefront of delivering programmes for the unemployed, which currently gets core non-apprenticeship

funding, and our view is that funding should be prioritised as well and programmes for the unemployed should have a higher priority.”

AELP chair and Skills Training UK chief executive Martin Dunford used his speech to warn the conference that the main political parties were focusing on quantity over quality when it comes to apprenticeships.

He said: “Isn’t it fantastic to have all three parties talking about apprenticeships? They’ve finally got the message, but it’s all about millions, millions, millions. The way they get around the success rates is to say ‘the quality’s not good enough and it needs to be improved’.

“Well actually the success rate is higher than ever, the satisfaction rate is higher than ever, and it’s embarrassing to talk about that when you’re trying to change something that’s not broken.”

But he said he had received a positive response from the new minister.

He added: “In our meetings so far we have

seen a very positive response to our ideas and concerns, quite surprising actually. The minister knows that we share the key objectives for our sector, which is to deliver high quality programmes to meet the needs of individuals and employers.”



Pics: photography@leeattwood.com

Manifesto calls for investment to fill skills gap

Continued investment to fill the skills gap is a top priority in the newly-rewritten manifesto of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP).

The updated document, which sets out a wish-list for government after the 2015 general election, was unveiled at the organisation’s autumn conference, and puts investment at the core of its message.

The manifesto insists that “tackling growing skills shortages is key to sustaining the recovery,” and that investment is needed to make sure everyone reaches a minimum level of skill, with programmes for the unemployed focusing on early intervention and personalised delivery.

Other priorities for the AELP in its updated manifesto include the need to “grow the credibility of traineeships,” better access to information about the labour market and more integration between programmes and initiatives.

Stewart Segal (pictured), AELP chief

executive, said: “Training providers will be encouraged that party leaders have placed apprenticeships among their highest priorities for the next parliament and I believe that growing the programme will not just make a big difference to people’s careers but will also make a significant contribution to answering employers’ skills needs as the economy continues to recover.

“However we have shown in AELP’s updated manifesto that other actions are also required to maximise the return and effectiveness of government investment in training in order to underpin a sustainable economic recovery and

strengthen social inclusion.”

The manifesto sets out 10 key points for action, including a balanced curriculum in schools with a focus on basic skills and functional English and maths, access to high-quality careers guidance, government funding for basic employability skills and competencies up to level two, better access to information about the labour market and training options and high-quality apprenticeships and traineeships.

Other points include an insistence that apprenticeship reforms must not risk the disengagement of young people and smaller businesses, increased credibility for traineeships, more coherent procurement across government departments, an emphasis on the “important role” of local enterprise partnerships and the need for open and transparent funding.



THIRD OF EMPLOYERS IN DARK ABOUT THEIR OWN APPRENTICES

Almost a third of employers with apprentices did not know they were running government-backed programmes, a senior civil servant has admitted.

Jennifer Coupland (pictured), deputy director of the joint apprenticeship unit at the Departments for Education and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, told the AELP autumn conference that a recent survey of employers had presented some “grim” statistics.

Speaking after Skills Minister Nick Boles,

she said: “It’s really heartening to see we are on track now for delivering 2m apprenticeship starts over this parliament. That’s amazing stuff, so you really do deserve a pat on the back. We also know the quality of those apprenticeships has been improving across the last four years.

“But if you do look under the bonnet, and I don’t want to rain on the minister’s very good

presentation this morning, there are some grim facts as well.

“Our last employer survey showed that 29 per cent of employers who had apprentices were unaware of the fact they had an apprentice. They were training somebody, they were aware of that, but they didn’t know the government was paying for a full apprenticeship.

“We also know around a fifth of small firms are

unable to find a framework which really does meet their needs, and as the minister has pointed out you’ve still got pretty low penetration into the numbers of employers offering apprenticeships. It’s hovering around the 10 per cent mark depending on how you measure.”

She added: “The reform plan was conceived as a way to address this sort of thing once and for all. To grow the quality and the quantity of apprenticeships, and we are going to do this by making it an employer-driven programme.”





JIM PROUDFOOT

Director, RITSresults Services, former Ofqual accreditation manager and ex-SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) project manager

Ofqual accreditation plan ‘not as straightforward as it sounds’

Jim Proudfoot looks at Ofqual plans for accreditation requirements.

In order for a qualification to be offered in England it must have been accepted onto the Register of Regulated Qualifications to show that it is of a required standard and fit for purpose.

Until now all these qualifications have had an “accreditation requirement”.

This means they have been individually reviewed against the General Conditions of Recognition and also against any other appropriate criteria before being accredited.

This requirement will be lifted next month.

The accreditation requirement will continue to apply to some qualifications, with Ofqual specifying A-levels and GCSEs.

Other curriculum-based qualifications and probably NVQs and qualifications aimed at apprenticeships, those deemed important enough to fund, may be specified at a later date. In fact they may not lose it at all.

Ofqual has not highlighted these qualifications and they may well keep their accreditation requirement. It has cleverly been left open. Each awarding organisation (AO) will be informed about specific qualifications and it may be that one AO has a requirement and another does not for the same qualifications.

It may be that one awarding organisation has an accreditation requirement and another does not for the same qualifications

It will not be as straightforward as it sounds.

Meanwhile, the rest will go through automatically to the register when submitted by an AO on RITS, the IT system used by the regulators as a portal to the register, but this does not mean any less scrutiny or care will apply.

Ofqual is also consulting on Guided Learning Hours (GLH) as well as the current arrangements for the QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework).

A major outcome of these initiatives for AOs will be the significant increase in their

workload just to ensure that all qualifications remain compliant with the conditions and other relevant criteria. This may also be exacerbated by a change to RITS itself and any potential risk rating that Ofqual applies. The content and structure of the vast majority of their qualifications will not change at all. It will affect funding.

There is considerable pressure on AOs already who are still getting used to the new system introduced by Ofqual in October 2010. It is not obvious where the breakdown in communication is. The number of recognised AOs has grown from 25 to almost 180 ranging from the very large to those with only a few qualifications — all vary in how they operate but all react in a similar way to the effects of change and to costs and funding.

Communication and clarity are the issues.

Regulations and other criteria are fairly high-level by nature otherwise they would be unworkable. The MOT certificate confirms a car is roadworthy but, legally, only applies to the time and day it is issued. It is the responsibility of the owner to maintain it or they will forfeit the right to use the road. The same applies to AOs and their qualifications.

Different messages come from different organisations at different times and rumours abound.

Ofqual has been the guardian of standards of qualifications in various guises over the years but it is led by government initiatives. Although it has a certain amount of autonomy it has to report to Parliament and implement what has been decreed.

Qualifications are the intellectual currency that indicate our potential to others and open doors of opportunity. They are also one way of measuring our own abilities and helping us achieve our goals.

There is a danger they will be undermined or devalued by risk taking and, as with the banking crisis, it will be those who can least afford to be given a chance to prove themselves who will pay the price.

A qualification is not an end in itself. It is the responsibility of the individual to use it as they see fit.

Ministers take advice from a range of experts before making a decision. Advice from groups who are not in regular communication with each other can be as detrimental as advice from one individual with nothing to compare it to.

Qualifications and curriculums are cyclical but the basics do not really go away, only the packaging changes.

While we must remain vigilant, it is the practitioners who need support to ensure we remain competitive — success will regulate success.



JANE BYFORD

Partner and head of employment, SGH Martineau solicitors

Looking out for apprentices during administration

With around 900 apprentices left uncertain of their future following the administration of Phones 4U, Jane Byford considers the legal position for learners, and also providers, in such a situation.

Although the economy is recovering and most businesses are gradually making their way out of the recession, the risk of going into administration still remains, as demonstrated recently by the demise of Phones 4U.

Insolvency affects all individuals who work for an organisation, but what particular impact does it have on apprentices and their training providers?

As a starting point, it is important to draw a distinction between “contracts of apprenticeship” and “apprenticeship agreements”.

Contracts of apprenticeship are traditional apprenticeship arrangements, the primary purpose of which is to provide training rather than performing work for the employer.

In contrast, apprenticeship agreements are entered into and governed by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and are akin to standard employment contracts.

The agreement is usually between the employer, the apprentice and the training provider and the arrangement must fulfil certain criteria.

At the end of the agreement, the apprentice will receive a recognised qualification and it is not the employer who provides the training but the training provider — often an FE institution.

Terminating apprenticeship contracts is less straightforward than terminating the contracts of other workers and employees.

While most employers are familiar with the rules governing dismissal of employees, ie there must be a fair reason and a fair process followed, many employers are unaware that an apprenticeship cannot necessarily be terminated in the same way as other fixed term contracts.

As the primary focus of a contract of apprenticeship is to provide training, an employer can only terminate the contract in limited circumstances eg severe misconduct or closure of the business.

If the employer terminates in other circumstances, it can be liable for loss of earnings and training for the remainder of the apprenticeship.

On the other hand, apprenticeship agreements can be terminated lawfully provided that the dismissal is fair and in accordance with the contract itself.

Where the employer goes into administration, unfortunately apprentices do not have protection over and above that afforded to other employees.

If the employer becomes insolvent and the employment is terminated, the National Insurance Fund (NIF) guarantees payment of certain employment debts, including up to eight weeks’ arrears of pay (with a cap on the amount that can be claimed as “weekly pay”) and certain amounts in respect of holiday pay, notice pay and redundancy payments.

The NIF also guarantees payments in respect of reasonable apprentices’ fees or premiums, with no cap on what can be recovered, but this protection extends to apprentices themselves, not to the training provider.

Without a replacement employer, the apprenticeship often cannot be completed

On insolvency there is no right to recover loss of future earnings and training, as is usually the case when a contract of apprenticeship is terminated.

Often, apprentices and their training providers will find that, despite the significant amount of time and money that has been invested in the apprenticeship, without a replacement employer, the apprenticeship cannot be completed.

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has confirmed that, in such situations, it will seek to identify potential alternative providers and to manage the transfer of apprentices to new providers, as well as redistributing funding to ensure learners and public funds are protected.

While there is no guarantee an apprentice will be safeguarded in the event of their employer going into administration, there is hope the SFA will assist where possible.

This may provide some comfort to apprentices who find themselves without an employer due to insolvency and indeed the SFA has confirmed it is striving to support those apprentices of Phones 4U who wish to continue and complete their apprenticeships.

However, it is well worth FE institutions having and maintaining links with numerous employers, so that they can assist apprentices in finding alternative employer in circumstances such as these.

Niace is calling for adults to have an entitlement to career reviews, not just in mid-life but at other points in their lives, including returning to work from maternity leave, long-term sick leave and caring responsibilities. David Hughes explains why.

Why, when most of us will now work for 50 or more years, do we expect people to make do with the (often inadequate) careers advice they had at school?

This is even more baffling when we know that people will change career many times and jobs will change enormously in coming years.

This lack of advice and support comes to a head at times of transition — perhaps re-entering the labour market after caring for children, or after redundancy, for instance.

The other big transition we have been looking at in the last year is when people enter mid-life — around the time we reach 50.

This is the age at which most people really start to think about retirement, and it often coincides with concerns about ill health, caring responsibilities, children starting their adult lives and even leaving home.

It is also a time when some people have paid off their mortgage and can see new opportunities.

This is why our Mid-life Career Reviews, which have since become part of the government’s Fuller Working Lives Proposals and have also been endorsed by the Liberal Democrats as part of their Manifesto, are such an effective intervention.

The economic case for helping people in



DAVID HUGHES

Chief executive, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace)

There’s always time for a career review

mid-life make the right choices about their careers is profound.

Our society is going through a fundamental change. People are living much longer. One-in-six of us is over 65, but by 2050 it will be one-in-four.

The economic case for helping people in mid-life make the right choices about their careers is profound

Over the next decade there will be almost twice as many vacancies as there will be new entrants to the labour market. There is also

a powerful social case — staying in work can help people feel valued and valuable, contributing rather than taking. That makes for better communities and stronger families as well as a stronger economy.

The latest evidence from our Mid-life Career Review Pilot Programme shows that, even though most people want to stay working, the majority end up retiring as soon as they can.

This is often due to ill health or not being able to find the right type of job to fit their desired lifestyle.

We have found in our work that small tweaks to designing jobs and to the workplace can help people stay working longer and that re-training can help people who are not physically able to continue in their job.

It’s absolutely vital older people have the right opportunities to develop their skills and participate in learning so they can stay productive, contribute to their employer’s

success, as well as making the final years of people’s working lives dynamic and fulfilling.

Our work has shown that the Mid-life Career Review — a simple and relatively cost-effective intervention — provides the information and confidence people need to take more control of their work and their lives.

It also aligns with Ros Altman’s three Rs — as discussed at our conference last week — retaining, retraining and recruiting.

A recent House of Lords report said that we were ‘woefully underprepared for our rapidly ageing population’. That is no longer an option.

We — national and local government, employers, local enterprise partnerships, providers, charities and individuals — must work together to ensure that as Britain ages it does so in a way that benefits everyone.

And we would like to see the career review model extended to help more people, especially those returning to work from maternity leave, long-term sick leave and caring responsibilities.

People do not like to think about getting older. As a country we have been slow to consider the full demographic implications that await us, some popular, others much less so.

But the simple fact remains that people delaying their retirement and working longer can help to diffuse the ‘ticking time-bomb’ of skills shortages and skills gaps for employers, help people stave off poverty in retirement and save money from the welfare bill.

Join us on board

THE SKILLS SHOW ON THE ROAD

- Have a Go at the Skills Challenge
- Share your talent on the ‘My Self, My Future’ stage
- Speak to local employers
- Get expert careers advice
- Find out about Apprenticeships and traineeships

Date	Location
21 October	Leicester Humberstone Gate West
22 October	Ipswich Trinity Park
23 October	Durham The Durham Centre
24 October	Liverpool Williamson Square
25 October	London Leicester Square
28 October	Portsmouth Commercial Road
30 October	Bath Saw Close Car Park
8 November	Birmingham Centenary Square

TO PERFORM,
REGISTER YOUR
INTEREST NOW

theskillsshow.com/
roadshow

@skillsshow /skillsshow

CAMPUS ROUND-UP

Students talk politics with radical poet



From left: Clare Owens, college head of English for Speakers of Other Languages, Jacque Stainburn student adviser, Benjamin Zephaniah and students Peter Marnell, aged 20, Dominic John, 21, and Stephen Boyle, 16

World-famous novelist, poet and playwright Benjamin Zephaniah spoke to students from West Cheshire College.

He talked about his new novel Terror Kid, which tells how a Romany boy fights back against injustices in the world, and took part in a current affairs debate with learners.

Extended diploma in performing arts student Stephen Boyle said: “I studied Benjamin’s poetry for GCSE so I know a lot of his work. I love the way he expresses his views. Even his funny poems have a serious message.”

The writer gained international recognition through his 1982 album Rasta, which featured The Wailers’ first recording since the death of Bob Marley and a tribute to Nelson Mandela.

Mr Zephaniah said: “I love political debates so I really enjoyed my time at the college.”

Footballer King meets students earning their ‘Spurs’

Former Premier League football club captain Ledley King scored with students during a visit to celebrate a training partnership between Tottenham Hotspur and Waltham Forest College.

The club and college set up a programme three years ago combining study towards BTec sport and coaching qualifications with football training.

Mr King, who played for Tottenham from 1999 to 2012, unveiled a plaque at the college to celebrate the partnership and told learners: “I saw plenty of good players fall by the wayside because they did not work hard enough. My advice would be to work hard and follow your dream.”

Amy Lewington, aged 18, who is studying on the programme, said: “I want to get into coaching and teaching and this course is brilliant.”

Waltham Forest College principal Robin Jones and ex-Spurs captain Ledley King with students on the training programme



AWARD WILL HELP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVOR TRAIN TO BE A SOCIAL WORKER

A dyslexic single mum-of-two who suffered at the hands of an abusive ex-partner before returning to education to pursue her dream of becoming a social worker has won a £1,500 Helena Kennedy Foundation bursary, writes Paul Offord.



From left: Charlotte Davies and City of Bath College principal Matt Atkinson

FEATURED CAMPUS ROUND-UP

Bath College I had very little self-confidence and self-belief, but I’ve achieved things academically that I never even thought were possible.”

Charlotte was nominated for the award by her Bath City College access to higher education tutor Larissa Perry.

Larissa said: “This is a young woman who has not only turned her own life around but also made it her mission to improve the lives of others.”

Charlotte started working as a care worker for the Action on Hearing Loss in her early 20s.

She helped launched a drama group for local people with special needs, through the charity in 2010, which she still volunteers for.

Charlotte and other local parents also launched a social group for children in her road in Bath, called The Chandler Rangers, in 2012.

She balances studying three days a-week with caring for her children Kenzie, aged seven, and Honey, five, working part-time for Action on Hearing Loss and helping out with the community groups.

She said: “It is a tough juggling act but it’s working out well. My son was actually under-achieving in school but going to college helped me to help him more with his maths and English homework.”

Dr Ann Limb, chair and founder for the Helena Kennedy Foundation, said: “We were delighted to offer Charlotte the bursary, as she is an intelligent, determined and resilient woman.”



From left: Charlotte, aged six, with her sisters Juliette and Nicolette

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?
Send your stories with pictures to campus@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course details of students where applicable

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who’s new and who’s leaving

The Manchester College is set for a new principal next month.

Lisa O’Loughlin takes over from Jack Carney having joined the college in July last year as a vice principal, from Blackburn College, where she was deputy principal.

She starts in the post from November 1 and will work alongside Mr Carney until his retirement on December 19.

John Thornhill, group chief executive of The Manchester College, said: “The combination of Lisa’s leadership style, her experience, knowledge and track record in the sector and her passion for quality and the success of all learners, makes Lisa the ideal successor to lead the college forward on the next stage of our exciting development plans.”

Sue Murphy, governors’ board chair, said: “I am delighted to announce the appointment of Lisa O’Loughlin as principal of The Manchester College.

“On behalf of The Manchester College’s board of governors, I’d like to congratulate Lisa on her new role and I look forward to working with her. This is an important and exciting appointment which I believe will be exactly what is needed to take the college forward at this point. Lisa shares the board’s passion for the college’s continued success and dedication to its mission.

“I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Jack Carney, for his long service and contribution to the college. He has worked tirelessly to raise aspirations, improve lives and support learners from all backgrounds to achieve.”

Meanwhile, the man charged with unifying Ofsted’s FE and skills inspection regime with all other education sectors is to step down from the education watchdog at the end of the year.

Mike Cladingbowl, national director of inspection reform, will be leaving his post on January 1 to become executive principal of a new multi-academy trust in North West England.

It is understood that until then he will continue working on proposals to merge all education inspections under a single framework from September next year, just three years after the current FE and skills common inspection framework (CIF) was introduced.

He said: “I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my national role with Ofsted and being able to make a real difference to education standards in England over the last 12 years.”

He added: “This is the right time for me to be taking on a new challenge. I’m very excited to be returning to my roots in Cheshire and being more directly involved in making a difference in schools. Before that, I still have a big job to do steering through Ofsted’s forthcoming consultation on the future of education inspection.”



Lisa O’Loughlin



Jack Carney



Mike Cladingbowl

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your college, training provider or awarding organisation please let us know by emailing news@feweek.co.uk

City & Guilds

TECHBAC®

BECAUSE WE NEED THEM

UP AND RUNNING

NOT JUST UP AND COMING

IT TAKES TECHBAC®

The City & Guilds TechBac® is a new curriculum that will provide learners with a professional pathway to their chosen careers. Paving the way for a new era of 14-19 education, the TechBac® will inspire learners who are confident, skilled and ready to work.

DISCOVER WHY IT TAKES TECHBAC® AT TECHBAC.COM



Activate Learning is a group which brings together secondary, further and higher education, along with workforce training, management consultancy, commercial businesses and social enterprise. At Activate Learning, we believe that education should inspire and develop the change-makers of the future. And to succeed we know that it must lead by example. Our purpose is to empower people to go further in learning and in life, by recognising their unique qualities and by providing an environment which builds confidence, raises aspirations and equips them to succeed.

Group HRIS & Payroll Manager

Salary: c. £50,000.00

We recognise that Activate Learning will only be an outstanding organisation and ‘Employer of Choice’ by attracting and retaining high performing, innovative and truly exceptional people.

As the Group HRMIS & Payroll Manager you will make a real contribution towards the achievement of Activate Learning’s goals by leading the Group HRIS and Payroll functions, ensuring that all statutory and contractual obligations for pay, benefits and pensions are met and that maximum usage is achieved from the HR management information system.

You will create an ‘exemplar’ service ensuring all pay and reward related practices, both functional and strategic, are documented, effective and reflect best practice and that the overall benefit and reward package is competitive.

You will have a passion for data and the integrity of the HRIS system ensuring that people related information is available, accurate and presented in a coherent manner.

Of graduate calibre and with proven extensive experience in payroll and HRIS you will have a sound track record of delivering within deadlines, driving improvements and developing a multi-skilled team. You should have strong communication, influencing and problem solving skills be commercially aware and customer centred.

This role provides the opportunity to develop your own skills and expertise in a forward thinking and dynamic organisation.

For an informal discussion on the role please contact **Karen Sanders, Group Director HR & OD on 01865 551014** or for further information and an application pack please contact: **Human Resources, Activate Learning, City of Oxford Campus, Oxpens Road, Oxford, OX1 1SA**

Or to apply on line visit our website **www.activatelearning.ac.uk/workingforus**

Closing date for applications:- **October 31, 2014**

TRIBAL working as one

Freelance Sales Consultancy

Tribal Education is a leading provider of vocational learning resources and support services to the further education sector. We are looking to expand our customer base and develop new partnerships across a range of further education providers.

We wish to grow our team of freelance sales consultants, either individuals or organisations, who can identify new customers and generate significant sales opportunities. If you are interested in working with us and would like an informal discussion please contact our Director of Commercial Services, Joe Keegan, by email to **joe.keegan@tribalgroup.com** or telephone **07736 807912**.

To find out more about Tribal’s work with the further education sector go to **www.tribalgroup.com/publishing**



TO ADVERTISE WITH US CALL
HANNAH SMITH ON

020 81234 778



Foundation and Skills Sessional GCSE English Lecturer

Minimum 15 hours per week including evening classes
£24.10 - £34.21 PER HOUR (INCLUDING HOLIDAY PAY)

Do you have the skills and expertise to successfully develop the GCSE English skills of young people?

We are a College rapidly improving towards outstanding and are seeking a highly experienced English tutor to join our team of staff who deliver GCSE English across College. The main responsibility of the role is to deliver the GCSE English course and enable your learners succeed.

Experience of working with young people aged 16-18 is essential as well as the ability to deliver the curriculum creatively. You will have excellent organisational skills and be able to work independently across the College.

Experience of teaching GCSE English is essential. You will hold a teaching qualification, a relevant degree or equivalent professional qualification, and it is desirable for you to possess a Level 4/5 subject specialist qualification.

As an experienced teacher, you will be flexible, approachable and preferably be familiar with the current issues and challenges within Further Education. You would be joining a supportive team which has a strong focus on improving standards and achieving success.

BCoT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its learners, and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake appropriate checks, including an enhanced DBS disclosure as well as providing proof of right to work in the UK.

BCoT is an equal opportunities employer and we welcome enquiries from everyone and value diversity in our workforce.

To apply for this post, please click on the link below:-
https://www.hirewire.co.uk/FE/1053284/THW_JobBoard.aspx

If you wish to send a CV with your application, please remember to click ‘upload’ after attaching it, otherwise your CV will not be sent to us.



Have you got what it takes to join an Outstanding College?

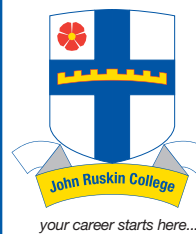
The College has been judged Outstanding by Ofsted (October 2013) and we are focused on becoming better still. Why? Because we think our students deserve the very best. We offer qualifications from pre-entry through to ESOL, GCE A levels, Apprenticeships and Higher Education programmes to meet the skills needs of our students aged from 14 upwards. Our staff salaries are very competitive with generous annual leave and Conditions of Services. We have very high standards and higher expectations of both ourselves and our students. We have exciting opportunities and are currently looking to recruit suitably qualified people for these posts.

Maths Teacher GCSE and Functional Skills

Salary range: £23,657 to £33,508 per annum

To learn more about these posts, the college and to apply, please visit www.johnruskin.ac.uk/jobs
Please email completed forms to recruitment@johnruskin.ac.uk

Closing date for these jobs will be the 24th October 2014
Interviews week commencing 3rd November 2014



We recognise and encourage the potential of a diverse workforce and positively welcome applications from people with disabilities and from black and ethnic minority communities.

All applications are subject to enhanced DBS clearance.

Selsdon Park Road,
South Croydon, CR2 8JJ
Tel: 020 8651 1131
Fax: 020 8651 4011



Sunderland College

EXTERNAL VACANCY Trainer/Assessor (English and Maths)

Post Ref: 5703, 37 hours per week. Full-time, Permanent.
£25,884 - £28,287 per annum

Sunderland College has a long history of employer engagement, achieved through developing the skills and knowledge that equip our learners to work in a diverse range of sectors. Today, Sunderland College works with over 400 businesses and is one of the largest providers of Apprenticeships in the region. The College is keen to continue to build on this success and expand its workforce having secured a number of significant contracts in the above areas.

We are seeking to appoint a suitably qualified Trainer/Assessor to work within the department of English and Maths. The majority of work will involve workplace delivery of Maths and English qualifications including our Apprenticeship provision.

The successful applicant will hold a Subject Specialism in Maths and/or English and a teaching qualification/assessors qualification would be preferable.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate their previous relevant experience in their personal statement and practical examples of how they fulfil the person specification.

Due to the nature of this post you will need to independently mobile and be able to travel throughout the North East and in some instances further afield. You will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure Check.

To find out more about this great opportunity visit sunderlandcollege.ac.uk/vacancies alternatively email vacancies@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk or call 0191 511 6046 to request an application pack.

All applications must be received by 5pm, Monday 20th October 2014.
Please note that previous applicants need not apply.

We are working towards equal opportunities and welcome applications from all sections of the community. We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.



ncfe. the grass is greener.

Switch to NCFE for an experience no other Awarding Organisation can offer.

Our commitment to service is the reason 2,000 Colleges, Private Training Providers and Schools choose NCFE each year.

Switching to NCFE is easy, call us today to find out how.

Call: 0191 239 8003 Email: switching@ncfe.org.uk
Visit: ncfe.org.uk/switch



FE Week Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

				5	6			
	5			8			9	
		8	9		4	2		
9		1				3		
7	8						5	6
		5				1		
		3	1		7	4		
	2			9			3	
			5	3				

Difficulty:
EASY

3				1	8	4		
6	5		9			2	3	
2				6	5	9		
		9	1	8				6
	2	6			3		1	9
		1	8	5				4

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

1	7	3	9	4	2	6	5	8
6	5	8	1	3	7	4	2	9
9	2	4	6	5	8	7	3	1
5	9	6	7	1	4	2	8	3
4	3	1	2	8	9	5	7	6
7	8	2	3	6	5	9	1	4
3	4	7	8	2	6	1	9	5
8	6	9	5	7	1	3	4	2
2	1	5	4	9	3	8	6	7

Difficulty:
EASY

6	5	3	9	4	1	8	7	2
9	4	8	3	2	7	5	6	1
7	1	2	5	8	6	4	3	9
1	6	7	8	3	4	9	2	5
3	2	4	6	9	5	1	8	7
8	9	5	7	1	2	3	4	6
4	3	6	2	5	9	7	1	8
5	7	1	4	6	8	2	9	3
2	8	9	1	7	3	6	5	4

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference
to WIN an FE Week mug!



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.

Last week's winner was Christy Lamb, data manager at Gateshead's TCV Employment and Training Services.